

HOW GOD COMES TO MAN

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“And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the LORD God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?”

Genesis 3:8-9

“HOW will God come to us now that we have rebelled against Him?” That is a question which must have greatly perplexed our first parents, and they may have said to one another, “Perhaps God will not come to us at all, and then we shall be orphans indeed. If spared to live on, we must continue to live without God and without hope in the world.” It would have been the worst thing that could have happened to our race if God had left this planet to take its own course, and had said concerning the people upon it, “I will leave them to their own way, for they are given over to idols.”

But if He came to our first parents, in what way would He come? Surely, Adam and Eve must have feared that He would be accompanied by the angels of vengeance, to destroy them straight away, or at any rate, to bind them in chains and fetters forever. So they questioned among themselves, “Will He come, and if He does, will His coming involve the total destruction of the human race?” Their hearts must have been sorely perplexed within them while they were waiting to see what God would do to them as a punishment for the great sin they had committed.

I believe they thought that He would come to them. They knew so much of His graciousness, from their past experience, that they felt sure that He would come, yet they also understood so much of His holy anger against sin that they must have been afraid of His coming, so they went and hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden, although every tree must have upbraided them for their disobedience, for every one of the trees would seem to say, “Why come you here? You have eaten of the fruit of the tree whereof you were forbidden to partake. You have broken your Maker’s command, and His sentence of death has already gone out against you. When He comes, He will certainly come to deal with you in judgment according to His faithful word, and when He does, what will become of you?”

Every leaf, as it rustled, must have startled and alarmed them. The breath of the evening breeze, as it passed through the garden, must have filled them with fear and dread as to the doom awaiting them.

Now, “in the cool of the day,” or as the Hebrew has it, “in the wind of the evening,” when the evening breeze was blowing through the garden, God came. It is difficult for us even to imagine how He revealed Himself to our first parents. I suppose He condescended to take upon Himself some visible form. It was “the voice of the LORD God” that they heard in the garden, and you know that it is the Word of God who has been pleased to make Himself visible to us in human flesh. He may have assumed some form in which they could see Him, otherwise, as a pure Spirit, God could not have been recognized either by their ears or their eyes.

They heard His voice speaking as He walked in the garden in the cool of the day, and when He called to Adam, albeit that there was righteous anger in the tone of His voice, yet His words were very calm and dignified, and as far as they could be, even tender, for while you may read the words thus, “*Adam, where art thou?*” you may also read them thus, “*Where art thou, poor Adam, where art thou?*” You may put a tone of pity into the words, and yet not misread them. So the Lord comes thus in gentleness in the cool of the day, and calls them to account, patiently listens to their wicked excuses, and

then pronounces upon them a sentence, which, heavy though it be towards the serpent, and heavy though it be towards all who are not saved by the woman's wondrous Seed, yet has much mercy mingled with it in the promise that the Seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent—a promise which must have shone in their sad and sinful souls as some bright particular star shines in the darkness of the night.

I learn from this incident, that God will come to sinful men, sooner or later, and we may also learn, from the way in which He came to our first parents, how He is likely to come to us. His coming will be different to different men, but we gather from this incident, that God will certainly come to guilty men, even if He waits till the cool of the day, and we also understand a little about the way in which He will ultimately come to all men.

Remember this, sinner, however far you may get away from God, you will have to come close to Him one of these days. You may go and pluck the fruit that He forbids you to touch, and then you may go and hide yourself amongst the thick boughs of the trees in the garden, and think that you have concealed yourself, but you will have to come face to face with your Maker at some time or other. It may not be today, or tomorrow, it may not be until "the cool of the day" of time, nay, it may not be till time itself shall be no more, but at last, you will have to confront your Maker.

Like the comet, that flies far off from the sun, wandering into space for an altogether inconceivable distance, and yet has to come back again, however long the time its circuit takes, so you will have to come back to God, either willingly, repently, believably, or else unwillingly, and in chains, to receive your sentence of doom from the lips of the Almighty, whom you have provoked to anger by your sin. God and you have to meet, as surely as you are now living here, at some time or other, each one of you must hear the voice of the LORD God saying to you, as He said to Adam, "Where art thou?"

Now, from this meeting between God and fallen man, I learn a few lessons, which I will pass on to you as the Holy Spirit shall enable me.

I. The first is this. When God did meet with fallen man, it was not until the cool of the day. This suggests to me GOD'S GREAT PATIENCE WITH THE GUILTY.

Whether Adam and Eve sinned in the early morning, or in the middle of the day, or toward evening, we do not know. It is not necessary that we should know this, but it is probable that the Lord God allowed an interval to intervene between the sin and the sentence. He was not in a hurry to come, because He could not come except in anger, to bring their sins home to them.

You know how quick the tempers of some men are. If they are provoked, it is a word and a blow with them, for they have no patience. It is our littleness that makes us impatient.

God is so great that He can endure far more than we can, and though our first parents' sin greatly provoked Him—and it is to His glory that He is so holy that He cannot look upon iniquity without indignation—yet He seemed to say to Himself, "I must go and call these two creatures of Mine to account for their sin, yet judgment is My strange work, it is mercy in which I delight. This morning, I drew back the curtains that had shielded them during the night, and poured the sunlight in upon them, not a second beyond the appointed time, and I was glad to do it, and all day long, I have been showering mercies upon them, and the refreshing night dews are already beginning to fall upon them. I will not go down to them till the latest possible moment. I will put it off till the cool of the day." God will do nothing in the heat of passion, everything shall be deliberate and calm, majestic and divine.

The fact that God did not come to question His sinful creatures till the cool of the day ought to teach us the greatness of His patience, and it should also teach us to be patient with others. How wondrously patient God has been with some of you who are here! You have lived many years, and enjoyed His mercies, yet you have scarcely thought about Him. Certainly, you have not yielded your hearts to Him, but He has not yet come to deal with you in judgment yet.

He has waited twenty years for you young people, thirty years, forty years, for you middle-aged folk, fifty years, sixty years, for you who are getting past that period, seventy years, perhaps, or even eighty years He has been known to tarry, for "He delighteth in mercy," but He does not delight in judgment. Seventy years form a long life, yet many persons spend all that time in perpetrating fresh sin. Called to

repentance over and over again, they only become the more impenitent through resisting the call of mercy. Favored with blessings as many as the sands of the seashore, they only prove themselves the more ungrateful by failing to appreciate all those blessings.

It is wonderful that God is willing to wait till the cool of such a long, long day of life as seventy or eighty years make up. How patient then, we ought to be with one another! Yet are you, parents, always patient with your children—your young children who may not have willingly or consciously offended you? What patience you ought always to exercise towards them!

And have you a like patience towards a friend or a brother who may use rough speech, and provoke you? Yet such your patience ought to be. Never should we take our brother by the throat and say to him, "Pay me what thou owest," so long as we find God deliberately waiting till the cool of the day before He comes to those who have offended Him, and even then uttering no more words of anger than should be uttered, and mingling even those words with mercy that has no bound.

II. The second thing that I gather from the Lord's coming to Adam and Eve in the cool of the day is HIS DIVINE CARE FOR THE GUILTY.

Though He did not come till the cool of the day, thus manifesting His patience, He did come then, thus manifesting His care for those who had sinned against Him. He might have left them all night long—all night long without their God—all night long without Him after they had done just what He had forbidden them to do—all night long—a sleepless night, a fearful night, a night that would have been haunted with a thousand fears—all night long with this great battle trembling in the balance, with the great question of their punishment unsolved, and an indefinable dread of the future hanging over them.

Many of you know that the trial of being kept in suspense is almost worse than any other trouble in the world. If a man knew that he had to be beheaded, it would be easier for him to die at once than to have to kneel with his neck on the block, and the gleaming axe lifted up above him, and not knowing when it might fall. Suspense is worse than death, we seem to feel a thousand deaths while we are kept in suspense of one. So God would not leave Adam and Eve in suspense through the whole night after they had sinned against Him, but He came to them in the cool of the day.

There was this further reason why He came to them—notwithstanding the fact that they had disobeyed Him, and that He would have to punish them, He remembered that they were still His creatures. He seemed to be saying within Himself, "What shall I do to them? I must not utterly destroy them, but how can I save them? I must carry out My threatening, for My word is true, yet I must also see how I can spare them, for I am gracious, and My glory is to be increased by the display of My grace towards them."

The Lord looked upon them as the appointed progenitors of His elect, and regarded Adam and Eve themselves also, let us hope, as His elect, whom He loved notwithstanding their sin, so He seemed to say, "I will not leave them all night without the promise which will brighten their gloom." It was only one promise, and perhaps, it was not clearly understood by them, still, it was a promise of God, even though it was spoken to the serpent, "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed, it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise His heel."

So, not one night were God's poor fallen creatures left without at least one star to gleam in the darkness for them, and thus He showed His care for them. And still, dear friends, though God is slow to anger, yet He is always ready to pardon, and very tender and compassionate even when He has to pass sentence upon the guilty. "He will not always chide; neither will he keep his anger for ever." You can see His care and consideration even for the most unworthy of us, because He has not cut us off in our sins. We are—

"Not in torments, not in hell."

We can see the marks of His goodness in the very garments on our backs and the food of which we partake by His bounty. Many of His gifts come, not merely to those who do not deserve them, but to those who deserve to be filled with the gall and wormwood of almighty wrath forever.

III. Now thirdly, I want to show you that WHEN THE LORD DID COME, HE AFFORDED US A PATTERN OF HOW THE SPIRIT OF GOD COMES TO AROUSE THE CONSCIENCES OF MEN.

I have already said that sooner or later, God will come to confront each one of us. I pray that if He has never come to you, dear friend, in the way of awakening your conscience, and making you feel yourself a sinner, He may come to you very speedily. And when He does come, to arouse and to awaken you, it is somewhat in this way.

First, *He comes seasonably*, "in the cool of the day." Adam's work was done, and Eve had no more to do until the next day. At that hour, they had been accustomed in happier times, to sit down and rest. Now God comes to them, and the Spirit of God when He comes to awaken men, generally visits them when they have a little time for quiet thought.

You dropped in and heard a sermon, the most of it slipped from your memory, but there were some few words that struck you so that you could not get rid of them. Perhaps though, you thought no more about the message to which you had listened. Something else came in, and took off your attention. But a little while after, you had to watch all night by the bedside of a sick friend, and then God came to you, and brought to your remembrance the words that you had forgotten.

Or it may be that some texts of Scripture, which you learned when you were a child, began to speak to you throughout the watches of the night. Or perhaps, you were going along a lone country road, or it may be, that you were out at sea on a dark night, and the billows rolled heavily so that you could not sleep, and you even feared that you would be swallowed up by the raging sea. Then—then came the voice of the Lord God speaking personally to you. When other voices were silenced, there was an opportunity for His voice to be heard.

Not only did the Lord come to Adam and Eve seasonably, but *He spoke to Adam personally*, and said, "Where art thou?" One of the great mistakes in connection with all preaching is that so many hearers will persist in lending other people their ears. They hear a faithful Gospel sermon, and they say, "That message would fit neighbor So-and-so admirably. What a pity Mrs. So-and-so did not hear it! That would have been the very word for her."

Yes, but when God comes to you, as He came to Adam and Eve—and if you are not converted, I pray that He may—the sermon He will deliver to you will be every word of it for yourself. He will say, "Adam," or "John," or "Mary," or whatever your name be, "where art thou?" The question will be addressed to yourself alone, it will have no relation to any of your neighbors, but to yourself alone. The question may take some such form as this, "Where art thou? What have you been doing? What is your condition now? Will you now repent, or will you still go on in your sins?"

Have not you, young man, had some such experience as this? You went to the theater, but when you came home, you said that you had not enjoyed it, and that you wished you had not gone. You went to bed, but you could not sleep. It seemed as if God had come to wrestle with you, and to reason with you about your past life, bringing up one thing after another in which you have sinned against Him. At all events, this is the way He deals with many, and if He deals thus with you, be thankful for it, and yield yourself up to Him, and do not struggle against Him.

I am always glad when men cannot be happy in the world, for as long as they can be, they will be. It is always a great mercy when they begin to be sick of the dainties of Egypt, for then we may lead them, by God's guidance, to seek after the milk and honey of the land of Canaan, but not till then. It is a great blessing when the Lord puts before you, personally, a true view of your own condition in His sight, and makes you look at it earnestly, concentrating your whole thought upon it, so that you cannot even begin to think about others because you are compelled to examine your own selves, to see what your real condition is in relation to God.

When the Lord thus comes to men, and speaks personally with them, *He makes them realize their lost condition*. Do you not see that this is implied in the question, "Where art thou?" Adam was lost—lost to God, lost to holiness, lost to happiness. God Himself says, "Where art thou?" That was to let Adam know this, "I have lost you, Adam, at one time I could speak with you as with a friend, but I cannot do so any longer. You were My obedient child once, but you are not so now, I have lost you. Where art thou?" May God the Holy Spirit convince every unconverted person here that he or she is lost—not only lost to themselves, and to heaven, and to holiness, and to happiness, but lost to God.

It was God's lost ones of whom Christ so often spoke. He was Himself the good Shepherd, who called together His friends and neighbors, saying to them, "Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost," and He represents His Father saying of His son when He has come back to Him, "'This my son was dead'—dead to Me—'and is alive again; he was lost'—lost to Me, 'and is found.'"

The value of a soul to God, and God's sense of loss in the case of each individual soul, is something worth thinking over, and worth calculating, if it can be calculated. God makes man realize that he is lost by His own moanings and pleadings, even as He said to Adam, "Where art thou?"

You will observe too, that the Lord not only came to Adam, and questioned him personally, but *He also made Adam answer Him*, and if the Lord has, in this way, laid hold of any of you, talking with you in the cool of the day, and questioning you about your lost condition, He will make you confess your sin, and bring you to acknowledge that it was really your own. He will not leave you as Adam wanted to be left, namely, laying the blame for the disobedience upon Eve, and He will not leave you as Eve tried to be left, namely, passing the blame on to the devil.

Before the Lord has done with you, He will bring you to the point that you shall feel, and confess, and acknowledge that you are really guilty of your own sin, and that you must be punished for it. When He brings you down to that point, and you have nothing at all to say for yourself, then He will pardon you.

I recollect well when the Lord brought me to my knees in this way, and emptied out all my self-righteousness and self-trust, until I felt that the hottest place in hell was my due desert, and that if He saved everybody else, but did not save me, yet still He would be just and righteous, for I had no right to be saved. Then, when I was obliged to feel that it must be all of grace, or else there could be no salvation for me, then He spoke tenderly and kindly to me, but at first, there did not seem to be any tenderness or pity to my soul.

There was the Lord coming to me, laying bare my sin, revealing to me my lost condition, and making me shiver and tremble, while I feared that the next thing He would say to me would be, "Depart from me, accursed one, into everlasting fire in hell," instead, He said to me, in tones of wondrous love and graciousness, "I have put thee among my children, 'I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee.'" Blessed be the name of the Lord, forever and ever, for such amazing treatment as this meted out to the guilty and the lost.

IV. Now, fourthly, and very solemnly, I want to show you that THIS COMING OF THE LORD TO ADAM AND EVE IS ALSO PROPHETICAL OF THE WAY IN WHICH HE WILL COME AS A JUDGING SPIRIT TO THOSE WHO REJECT HIM AS AN AWAKENING SPIRIT.

I have already reminded you, unconverted ones, that as surely as you live, you will have to come to close terms with God, like the rest of us. Sooner or later, you will have to know Him, and to know that He knows you. There will be no way of escaping from an interview which will be most serious and most terrible for you. It will happen "in the cool of the day." I do not know when that may be.

On my way to this service, I called to see a young lady, to whom "the cool of the day" has come at twenty-five, or thirty years of age. Consumption has made her life day a comparatively short one, but blessed be God, His grace has made it a very happy one, and she is not afraid, "in the cool of the day," to hear the voice of the Lord God calling her home.

It is well that she is not afraid, but you, who have not believed in Jesus, will have to hear that same divine voice in the cool of your life's day. You may be spared to grow old, the strength of youth and of

manhood will have gone, and you will begin to lean on your staff, and to feel that you have not the vigor you used to have, and that you cannot do such a hard day's work as you used to do, and you must not attempt to run up the hills as you once did. That will be "the cool of the day" to you, and then the Lord God will come in to you, and say, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die, and not live."

Sometimes that cool of the day comes to a man just when he would have liked it to be the heat of the day. He is making money, and his children are multiplying around him, so he wants to stop in this world a little longer. But that cannot be, he must go up to his bed, and he must lie there for so many days and nights, and then he must hear the voice of the Lord God as He begins to question him and say, "Where are you in relation to Me? Have you loved Me with all your heart, and mind, and soul, and strength? Have you served Me? Are you reconciled to Me through the death of My Son?"

Such questions as these will come to us as surely as God made us, and we shall have to give an account of the deeds done in the body, whether they have been good or whether they have been evil. I pray you to think of these things, and not to say, "Ah! that will not happen just yet." That is more than any of us can tell, and let me remind you that life is very short even at the longest.

I am especially appealing to those who are of my own age. Do not you, dear friends, find that when you are between forty and fifty years of age, the weeks seem to be much shorter than they used to be when you were young? I therefore gather that when our friends are seventy or eighty years of age, time must seem far shorter to them than it ever was before.

I think that one reason why Jacob, when he was a hundred and thirty years old, said to Pharaoh, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been," was simply this—that he was really such an old man, though not as old as his ancestors, that time seemed even shorter to him than it did to younger men. If that was so, then I suppose that the longer a man lives, the shorter would time appear to be. But short or long, your share of it will soon be over, and you will be called upon to gather up your feet in bed, and meet your fathers' God.

When that solemn and decisive hour comes, your interview with God will have to be a personal one. Sponsors will be of no use to anyone upon a dying bed. It will be of no avail then, to call upon Christian friends to take a share of your burden. They will not be able to give you of their oil, for they have not enough grace for themselves and you. If you live and die without accepting the aid of the one Mediator between God and man, all these questions will have to be settled between your soul and God without anyone else coming between yourself and your Maker, and all this may happen at any moment.

This personal talk between God and your soul, at the end of your life, may be ordained to take place this very night, and I am sent as a forerunner, just to give you this warning, so that you may not meet your God altogether by surprise, but may at any rate, be invited and exhorted to be prepared for that great interview.

Whenever that interview takes place, God will deal with you in solemn earnestness—personally bringing home your sin to you. You will be unable to deny it, for there will be One present at that interview, who has seen it all, and the inquiries which He will make about the state of your soul will be very searching ones. He will not merely ask about one sin, but about all your sins. He will not only ask about your public life, but also about your private life, nor yet merely inquire about your doings, but about your sayings, and your willings, and your thinkings, and about your whole position in relation to Himself, even as He asked Adam, "Where art thou?"

In imagination—I pray that it may be only in imagination—I see some of you die unsaved, and I see you as you pass into the next world unpardoned, and your soul realizes for the first time, what was the experience of the rich man, of whom our Savior said, "In hell he lifted up his eyes"—as though he had been asleep before, and had only just awakened to his true condition. "He lifted up his eyes," and gazed all around, but he could see nothing except that which caused him dismay and horror, there was no trace of joy or hope, no trace of ease or peace.

Then, through the awful gloom, there came the sound of such questions as these, "Where are you, sinner? You were in a house of prayer a few weeks ago, and the preacher urged you to seek the Lord,

but you procrastinated. Where are you now? You said that there was no such place as hell, but what do you say about it now? Where are you? You despised heaven and refused Christ, where are you now?" What horror will seize the disembodied spirit as it reflects that it has brought itself into the condition of which it was warned, and from which it was invited to escape, but which it willfully chose for itself, thus committing eternal suicide! The Lord in mercy preserve all of you from doing that! But if you will do it, then shall come forth from the lips of the justly offended God the irrevocable sentence, "Depart from me, ye cursed."

One of the most dreadful things in connection with this meeting of God with Adam was that Adam had to answer the Lord's questions. The Lord said to Him, "Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?" In our courts of law, we do not require men to answer questions which would incriminate them, but God does, and at the last great day, the ungodly will be condemned on their own confession of guilt.

While they are in this world, they put on a brazen face, and declare that they have done no wrong to anybody—not even to God—they pay their way, and they are as good as their neighbors, and better than the most of them, but all their brag and bravado will be gone at the day of judgment, and they will either stand speechless before God—and by their speechlessness acknowledge their guiltiness in His sight, or if they do speak, their vain excuses and apologies will but convict themselves.

They will, out of their own mouths, condemn themselves, like that wicked and slothful servant, who was cast into the outer darkness where there was weeping and gnashing of teeth. God grant that we may never know, from sad personal experience, what that expression means!

V. Now lastly, this meeting of God with Adam should lead us, who believe in Christ, to EXPECT TO MEET HIM ON THE MOST LOVING TERMS, for if, even when He came to question guilty Adam, and to pass sentence upon him, He did it so gently, and mingled with the thunder of His wrath the soft shower of His grace, when He gave the promise that "the Seed of the woman" should bruise the serpent's head, may we not expect Him to meet us, by and by, on the most loving terms, if we are in that woman's Seed, and have been saved by Jesus Christ His Son?

He will come in the evening, brother and sister, when the day's work is done, so do not fret about the burden and heat of the day. The longest and hottest day will come to an end, you will not live here forever. You will not always have to wear your fingers to the bone in trying to earn a scanty livelihood. You will not always have to look round upon your children, and wonder where the bread will be found with which to feed them. No, the days on earth cannot last forever, and with many of you, the sun has already climbed the hill, and begun to go down the other side, and "the cool of the day" will soon come.

I can look upon a good many of you who have already reached that period. You have retired from active service, you have shaken off a good deal of business care, and now you are waiting for your Master to come to you. Rest assured that He will not forget you, for He has promised to come to you. You will hear His voice before long, telling you that He is walking in the garden, and coming to you. Good old Rowland Hill, when he found himself getting very feeble said, "I hope they have not forgotten poor old Rowley up there." But he knew that he was not forgotten, nor will you be, beloved.

You will hear your Lord's voice before long, and the mercy is that you will know it when you do hear it. Have you not often heard it before now? Many a time in this house, you have heard His voice, and you have been glad. In the cool of many an evening you have sat still, and communed with God. I like to see an old Christian woman, with her big Bible open, sitting by the hour together, and tracing with her finger the precious words of the Lord, eating them, digesting them, living on them, and finding them sweeter to her soul than honey or the droppings of the honeycomb to her taste.

Well then, as you have heard your Lord's voice, and know its tones so well, as you have been so long accustomed to hear it, you will not be astonished when you hear it in those last moments of your life's day. You will not run to hide yourself, as Adam and Eve did. You are covered with the robe of Christ's righteousness, so you have no nakedness to fear, and you may respond, "Did You ask, my Lord, 'Where art thou?' I answer, 'Here am I, for thou didst call me.' Did You ask where I am? I am hidden in

Your Son, I am ‘accepted in the Beloved.’ Did You say, ‘Where art thou?’ Here I stand, ready and waiting to be taken up by Him, according to His promise that where He is, there I shall be also, that I may behold His glory.”

Why, surely, beloved, as this is the case, you may even long for the evening to come when you shall hear His voice, and shall be up and away from this land of shadows and chilly night-dews, into that blest place where the glory burns on forever and ever, the Lamb is the light thereof, and the days of your mourning shall be ended forever.

God grant that you may all have a part and a lot in that glory, for His dear Son’s sake! Amen.

EXPOSITION BY C. H. SPURGEON

GENESIS 3

Verses 1-9. *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: but of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the LORD God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the LORD God amongst the trees of the garden. And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?*

In tones of mingled pity and rebuke He asked, “Where art thou?”

10-11. *And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked; and I hid myself. And he said,—*

Note the calm majesty of every word. Here is no human passion, but divine dignity, “And he said,—

11-12. *Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou shouldst not eat? And the man said, The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.*

There is no sign of true confession here. Adam had been an unfallen creature a few hours before, but now, he had broken the commandment of the Lord, and you can see how completely death was brought into his moral nature, for if it had not been so, he would have said “My God, I have sinned, can You and will You forgive me?” But instead of doing so, he laid the blame for his sin upon his wife, which was an utterly mean action, “The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat.”

He almost seemed to lay the blame upon God because He had given him the woman to be with him. He was guilty of unkindness to his wife and of blasphemy against his Maker, in seeking to escape from confessing the sin which he had committed. It is an ill sign with men when they cannot be brought frankly to acknowledge their wrong doing.

13. *And the LORD God said unto the woman, What is this that thou hast done?*

Oh, that question! How far reaching it is! By her action, and her husband’s, the floodgates had been pulled up, and the flood of sin had been let loose upon the world. They had struck a match, and set the world on fire with sin. And every one of our sins is essentially of the same nature, and has in it,

substantially, the same mischief. Oh, that at any time when we have sinned, God would ask each one of us the question, "What is this that thou hast done?"

13. *And the woman said, The serpent beguiled me, and I did eat.*

Still, you see, there is no confession of guilt, but only the attempt to push the blame off upon somebody else. The Lord God did not ask the serpent anything, for He knew that he was a liar, but He at once pronounced sentence upon him:—

14-15. *And the LORD God said unto the serpent, Because thou hast done this, thou art cursed above all cattle, and above every beast of the field; upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat all the days of thy life: and I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel.*

And now, there is no creature so degraded as that once bright angel, who is now the devil. He is always going about with serpentine wriggling, seeking to do more mischief. On his belly does he go, and still is dust his meat. That which is foul, material, carnal, he delights in. And his head is bruised, blessed be the name of the woman's promised Seed! The old serpent's head is bruised with a fatal bruising, while the wounded heel of our Savior is the joy and delight of our hearts.

16-17. *Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee. And unto Adam he said, Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree, of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shall not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life;*

How obliquely fell the curse! Not, "Cursed art thou," as the Lord said to the serpent; but "Cursed is the ground for thy sake."

18-21. *Thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee; and thou shalt eat the herb of the field; in the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground; for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return. And Adam called his wife's name Eve: because she was the mother of all living. Unto Adam also and to his wife did the LORD God make coats of skins, and clothed them.*

Some creature had to die in order to provide them with garments, and you know who it is that died in order that we might be robed in His spotless righteousness. The Lamb of God has made for us a garment which covers our nakedness so that we are not afraid to stand even before the bar of God.

22-24. *And the LORD God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil: and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live for ever: therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man; and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.*

HYMNS FROM "OUR OWN HYMN BOOK"—397, 715

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